

of active transportation. BCRPA also recently held an Active Transportation Workshop in Abbotsford.

*“The decision makers need to understand how important it is that we start heading down this road,”* Creelman said.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

A month-long, community-wide physical activity challenge in 2005 and 2006 called Fall in motion had people filling in activity logs then submitting them for chances to win prizes, including West Jet tickets to anywhere in Canada.

*“We had about 100 prizes donated from businesses in the community,”* Creelman said. In 2006, 600 people sent in activity logs during the challenge. Each year, the challenge starts off with a kick-off event on its first day.

On Canada Day this year (2007), in motion will be putting on an Across Canada Challenge event at Rotary Park. Participants will check off boxes on cards after they complete each of five activity stations at the event for a chance to win incentives.

In addition to putting on its own events, in motion supports and takes part in community events and presentations that have a physical activity component.

*“We try as a strategy to link into those events that already exist,”* Creelman

said. *“We don’t provide the programming—we support those that provide the programming. If they come to us and they want a prize or help to promote them or they want us to show up and say a few words about the importance of physical activity, we’ll be there.”*

### MOVING FORWARD

In 2004, University College of the Fraser Valley completed a baseline survey to gauge the physical activity levels of Abbotsford residents. The results of the 769 responses showed that although 76% of respondents reported being physically active, 39% were active enough to gain health benefits.



The following month, an in motion marketing plan emerged. Marketing materials created for in motion included a website ([www.abbotsfordinmotion.com](http://www.abbotsfordinmotion.com)), brochures, posters, advertisements, newsletters, in motion cards, certificates, activity logs and many more giveaways. Almost a year after the March 2005 official in motion launch, survey results revealed a 42% public awareness rate of the strategy.

In motion will be doing a follow-up measurement survey in September (2007). In addition, in motion tracks the number of schools onboard, the number of cham-

pions, press coverage, free advertising, in-kind contributions, the number of workplace champions, the number of events in motion supports, the number of people at the kick off events, the number of people participating in the Fall in motion challenge, incentives sales at parks and recreation facilities, and website hits.

In 2006, Creelman received a Fraser Health Above and Beyond award for collaborative partnerships, as well as a YWCA Women of Distinction award for her work with in motion. She also won a Community Leader award at the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards. Now after four and a half years, Creelman has announced she will be leaving in motion to head to Kelowna in the summer of 2007.

*“I think a lot has been accomplished and it will continue just fine when I move on and that’s very, very important to me,”* Creelman said.

Filling her role is Tracy Steere, who is continuing Creelman’s work and steering the future direction of in motion. Steere is keeping the community events and the school and workplace programs going, while working with the Canadian Cancer Society to increase awareness of the benefits of physical activity among Abbotsford’s South Asian population. Looking ahead, Steere is working on expanding and tying in the ActNow BC goals to in motion’s physical activity strategy to promote healthy living.

## Delta Recreation Makes the Grade

*Written in April 2007*

People of all ages in Delta are getting more physically active, thanks to programs launched by the Delta Parks, Recreation and Culture Department’s Active Community Team. The community has made significant headway developing its

programming since registering as an Active Community in March 2006.

Delta participated in a Discovery Research baseline measurement survey of physical activity levels, coordinated by the BC Recreation and Parks Association

through its Active Communities Initiative in 2006. The results showed low cost or free recreational opportunities would encourage 51% of residents to be more physically active. So Delta has come up with creative ways to do just that.

## Delta Recreation Makes the Grade, cont...

### GRADE 5 RECREATION PASS

Delta piloted a plan to offer free recreation passes to Grade 5 students. The program's been such a success that it will now be extended to Grade 6 students.



It started when the Delta Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission recognized Grade 5 (age 10) is a pivotal year for shaping children's active lifestyle choices. So the Commission launched the Grade 5

pass program in January 2005. The then Commission Manager John McMurchy noted Grade 5 students are at an age when typically they can drop in to the ice rink or swimming pool without a parent. This program enables them to head to the recreation centre with their friends after school even without pocket change, instead of hanging around looking for something to do.

*"This is one tool that we have to use in order to get everybody engaged in physical activity,"* said McMurchy.

Each pass is valid from September 1 to August 31 of the Grade 5 year, allowing free unlimited access to drop-in programs and services at Delta recreation facilities, such as public skates, swims and open gyms.

The recreation department gets the word out to students through teachers in public and private schools, as well as parents in home schools, who pass on information pamphlets.

*"The promotions are so simple, and this is, in my opinion, the beauty of this program,"* said McMurchy. In the 2005/2006 school year, more than 1,000 (82%) of



the Grade 5 students in Delta used the passes.

Despite concerns over potential revenue loss, staff estimate they've actually broken even on the costs of offering the free passes due to the tendency for Grade 5 students to bring along a sibling, parent or other paying customer. Also, there are long-term revenue benefits if Grade 5 students become life-long customers.

After a positive response from parents and suggestions to extend the program, Delta council approved the staff recommendation to provide 10 free admissions to each Grade 6 student, beginning in September 2007. Grade 5 students who regularly use their passes will now be able to bridge into the next school year, continuing the healthy lifestyle choices they have developed.

Also starting in the fall, in an effort to encourage adults to get active, Grade 5 students with passes can bring a parent



with them for free.

*"So you could go skating and your mom could go work out in the weight room or take an aerobics class,"* explains Active Community Team Member and Delta Municipal Wide Service Analyst Julie Halfnights.

In addition, the city will conduct a survey this fall to determine what activities Grade 5 students are doing in their spare time.

*"This is an opportunity for kids to continue to do something positive,"* Halfnights said.

The Grade 5 recreation pass program has been such a success that other municipalities are following suit. Active Community teams in Port Moody, Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam have created similar programs. Burnaby, White Rock, Richmond and communities on Vancouver Island and even in Ontario are starting to explore the idea.

### LIONS WELLNESS PARK AT WINSKILL

Delta resident Harry Caine's vision of building a wellness park to get seniors in the community active and stronger became a reality when the sod was turned for the Lions Wellness Park in April. The facility in Tsawwassen's Winskill Park now contains community garden plots and wellness stations with outdoor workout equipment, new pathways, trees and benches.



Caine's inspiration came from a similar park he'd seen in China.

*“He brought it back and made the pitch and really got people energized,”* McMurchy said. *“Adults need to play, and when you play you get fit.”*

The project is a partnership between Delta Parks, Recreation and Culture (maintenance), the Tsawwassen Boundary Bay Lions Club (purchase and installation), and Trinity Western University’s Kinesiology Department (planning).

The seven community garden plots have flat, wheelchair-accessible surfaces. The two fitness areas have equipment to develop strength, balance and cardio. The equipment is similar to playground gear in that it’s weather-resistant.

The area is next to a children’s playground and a synthetic turf field so the park will encourage intergenerational activity, said Superintendent of Parks Projects Rick Daykin (also an Active Community Team Member).

*“There is a lot of opportunity for socialization and activity at all age groups,”* said Daykin. He expects most of the community gardeners to come from a nearby retirement centre. *“The main objective is to provide opportunities for the aging population for various activities, whether it’s a community garden, bocce, tai chi, yoga, or fitness equipment use,”* Daykin said. He emphasizes the importance of seniors developing their physical strength for daily activities such as carrying bags home from the grocery store.

### ACTIVITY CARDS FOR PARENTS

The Parks, Recreation and Culture department will soon be handing out activity cards to parents at children’s sports games with tips on how spectators can get active while the kids are warming up.

*“The hope here is that instead of hanging around, milling about before the game actually begins, you go for a walk around the stands,”* said Halfnights.

Staff have created the cards and plan to distribute them to all user groups with parent spectators, mainly on the days the players get their photos taken. The cards will have Did You Know? tips on them, such as the number of calories burned by walking around an arena six times.

### ACTIVE COUNCILLORS

The Recreation department has initiated a game break for commissioners and councillors during its meetings. Staff tried it out at a Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meeting, stopping for a stretch and a quick game. The schoolyard game of passing an object over and under your legs was a hit, getting people stretching and bending.

*“They all got up and they laughed and they had a good time, and the meeting went better after that,”* said McMurchy. *“It was the emotional benefit that was really quite rewarding. Several of the councillors said we should do this at council.”*

The two-minute exercise break sets a good example for members of the public watching the meeting at home on TV when they see members of council getting active, added McMurchy.

Out in the hallway, staff set up a hopscotch course with masking tape for people to hop through on their way in and out of meetings.

*“Some notice it, others don’t, some play,”* said McMurchy. *“It’s not getting everybody involved in everything—one thing cannot be the panacea, it’s all the little things. If somebody does a hopscotch going in and coming out of a meeting, that’s going to be better than if they don’t. They might learn how to play again, and if they play, they will be active.”*

- Expanding the Grade 5 free recreation pass to Grade 6 students
- Building a wellness park with opportunities for seniors to get fit
- Reaching out to parents at sports events with resources suggesting ways to get active
- Bringing physical activity breaks into municipal council meetings to lead by example
- Running a Delta Steps Out online activity tracker program
- 24 schools registered with Action! Schools BC

## Delta Info

- **Population:** 102,655 (Census Canada 2005)
- **Region:** Lower Mainland
- **About Delta:** Delta is home to an abundance of modern recreation facilities and an extensive system of municipal, community, and neighbourhood parks, scenic trails, cycling routes and walking paths. The community borders Boundary Bay, the Strait of Georgia and the Fraser River, all with waterfront parks. Delta has one of the fastest-growing industrial areas in Greater Vancouver.

(Source: Corporation of Delta website, [www.corp.delta.bc.ca](http://www.corp.delta.bc.ca))

### Delta Recreation Makes the Grade, cont...

#### DELTA STEPS OUT

Following the lead of the Penticton Steps Out walking program, Delta started up a similar initiative in 2005 to raise awareness about the benefits of daily physical activity. Delta Steps Out completed its first successful year in November 2006 with 160 enthusiastic participants. The program offers monthly prize incentives to participants in addition to its grand prize trip in the Walk to Whistler contest.

The 2006 Walk to Whistler winner, North Delta resident Debra Morris, walked 1,152,265 steps between April and November, exceeding the draw's minimum requirement. Recreation staff reports the Delta Steps Out program has made a

huge difference in Morris' life by motivating her— as well as her friends, family and colleagues who have to keep up with her.

*"This program got me off the couch and out walking; it has helped me become more physically active again,"* Morris said. Morris remains in Delta Steps Out and is regularly swimming at local pools.

Participants can buy log books for \$5, pedometers for \$15 and register at the Delta Steps Out website to track their steps for free. The website also displays maps of walking routes and stretching tips. The minimal cost of running the website is absorbed into the fitness budget, while Delta's Fitness Programmer sets up on-

line accounts as part of her regular work.

Halfnights has noticed people ages 45 and up are the most active participants. The program has also taken off among staff at the municipal hall, where designated walk leaders and incentives get people moving daily.

McMurphy anticipates the program will continue to grow with city plans to develop a trail system connecting residential areas and parks.

After leading the Active Community team for a year, John McMurphy has passed the baton to Julie Halfnights to keep the momentum going.

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### Seabird Island Sets the Pace for First Nations

*Written in June 2007*

The Seabird Island Indian Band's Recreation Department has been getting people walking and running out the door with its Active Communities programs and events.

Seabird's Nutrition Educator Noy Khounviseth and Community Services Supervisor Stacy McNeil have started working together to link healthy eating and active living. It's part of the promotion of their local Active Communities program called the Active Seabird initiative.

*"It's really exciting to see because Noy, with the nutrition background, is starting to get more people coming to talk to her about healthy eating, then she's referring them to me for activity and vice versa,"* McNeil said. *"We're getting*

*people that we traditionally wouldn't ever see active or in the fitness centre, they're actually coming out now and approaching us and saying, 'My cousin did this and I think I can do this.'"*

*"Stacy has had a lot of success with people losing weight, but not going on a diet per se; they are losing weight by being active and looking at their nutrition,"* Khounviseth said.

An Active Seabird Active Communities Plan lists the planned events from March to August 2007 and beyond. To get the word out, Active Seabird events and programs have been listed in a monthly Seabird Island Community Newsletter ([www.seabirdisland.ca/news/newsletters.htm](http://www.seabirdisland.ca/news/newsletters.htm)).

Since registering as an Active Community in January 2006, the Active Seabird team has kept existing annual events going and has created a host of new active events and programs for all ages. This has been accomplished with the support of a \$5,000 BCRPA Active Communities grant.

#### RUNNING AND WALKING FOR HEALTH

The fourth annual Nutrition Run and Walk in March brought out approximately 240 people. Participants could choose to do a 5, 10 or 15 kilometre course. It also featured a nutritious lunch for everyone and a massage for the 15-kilometre runners. Neighbouring First Nations communities were also invited.